

City of Corvallis Community Development Department



ANNUAL REPORT FY 2011-2012

Message from the Director

Greetings,

We are pleased to provide this report to you about the activities of the Corvallis Community Development Department during the fiscal year 2011-12. You will find information about the variety of accomplishments, projects and ongoing efforts of Community Development staff in the areas of community planning, construction permitting and inspection, code compliance and affordable housing programs. Much of this work is done with the support of other City departments, local agencies and citizen volunteers. We thank you for your guidance and assistance.

I would like to highlight several areas that reflect the important work of Community Development Department:

- The community celebrated the completion of the Alexander Court and Seavey Meadows project which resulted in the addition of 48 affordable rental housing units. This has been a long time commitment of the City and the Housing Division in partnership with the Willamette Neighborhood Housing Services, developers of the project.
- The Planning Division completed the staff work associated with a major set of revisions to the Land Development Code. This package was reviewed and approved by the Planning Commission and City Council in the fall of 2012 and was completed on time and budget despite the elimination of the City's long range planning position due to budget pressures.
- The Development Services Division is completing the second of a three year implementation of our Service Enhancement Program. Results include increasing the percentage of permits that are issued over-the-counter by 61 % percent and implementation a one-day-review program for single family residential housing applications.
- Special project activities included assisting the Economic Development Commission in creating an economic development strategy that was approved by the City Council and completion of a Master Plan update for the City owned Airport Industrial Park.
- Collaboration Corvallis, the partnership between Oregon State University and City was launched with impressive work underway by both organizations and community members who have dedicated their time, talents and energy to this important effort.

In the year ahead, we look forward to continuing our work on many of these projects and on Community Development's mission to help advance the vision of the Corvallis community.

Thank you for taking time to read this report. If you have any questions or suggestions, please feel free to call me at (541) 766-6981 or e-mail ken.gibb@ci.corvallis.or.us.

Sincerely,

Ken Gibb

Community Development Director



OSU Kearney Hall

City/OSU Collaboration Project

In the fall of 2011 the City of Corvallis and Oregon State University officials formed the City/OSU Collaboration Project. The project, based on shared goals, was formed in an effort to address the opportunities and issues associated with the future growth of OSU and the Corvallis community. The first phase of this 2-3 year project was the creation of three work groups formed to address the Project's major topic areas:

- Parking and traffic mitigation in campus area neighborhoods
- Neighborhood planning and
- Neighborhood livability

Community Development Department Director Ken Gibb has been a part of the project management team charged with providing the professional and technical assistance work groups need in the development of recommendations that will be brought to the Project Steering Committee to review and approve. Each work group meets on average twice monthly, with many hours of Community Development Department and OSU staff devoted to the research

and development of a set of near-term strategies for each group. These strategies were presented to each of the workgroups in June, and assessed based on their cost and ease of implementation, their degree of coordination with possible long-term strategies, and their responsiveness to objectives established by the Scope of Work. It is anticipated that recommendations on the near-term strategies will be presented to the Steering Committee in November.



Planning & Development Project Meeting

Community Partner Spotlight— CORVALLIS HOMELESS SHELTER COALITION

Each year we write about one of the Community Development Department's nonprofit partner agencies and the services they provide to the community. This year our focus is on a relatively new but increasingly important agency, the Corvallis Homeless Shelter Coalition.

Organized in 2007, the Coalition's first project was a temporary cold weather shelter for homeless men. That shelter continues to operate for four months each winter, serving as many as 100 individuals from mid-November through mid-March. The City of Corvallis Community Development Block Grant program has been a consistent source of funding for the winter shelter.

As the Coalition's mission evolved in recent years, a new goal emerged: acquire a small apartment building and rent units to homeless people under a "housing first" concept. The goal of "housing first" is to move people quickly from homelessness to stable housing, and then once they are housed, to offer a tailored set of support services to keep them stable and help them overcome the challenges that led to their homelessness.

In July 2011 the Coalition opened Partners Place, an eight-unit apartment building located on NW Harrison Boulevard. The Coalition combined private resources with funding from the City's HOME Investment Partnerships program and the State of Oregon's Housing Plus program to acquire the building, which had been rebuilt following a previous fire and demolition. Because the Coalition had planned for the project's opening well in advance, qualified tenants were ready to move in as soon as the building was completed.

Speaking on the importance of the City's investments in their efforts, Coalition Director Gina Vee says, "One cornerstone of our projects is the early financial and ongoing technical assistance of our local government partners. The Corvallis Homeless Shelter Coalition is grateful for the intelligence and guidance the City's Housing Division has contributed to our endeavors. We are fortunate to live in a community in which City government works actively to identify and support projects that address the needs of low-income members of the community."

Our thanks to the Corvallis Homeless Shelter Coalition for their good work, and for their dedication to helping members of our community with a very challenging set of needs.

To learn more about the Coalition and their efforts, visit their Web site at <http://www.corvallishomeless.org>.



Project Highlight— CARDV Advocacy Center

Over the course of the last several years the Center Against Rape and Domestic Violence (CARDV) has worked with Willamette Neighborhood Housing Services (WNHS) and the City's Housing Division on a project concept to provide advocacy services for survivors of domestic violence from a neighborhood-based facility near their homes. WNHS's recently completed Alexander Court affordable housing project in South Corvallis, across Third Street from Lincoln School, provided the ideal opportunity to turn that concept into reality.

As the Alexander Court project was being designed, CARDV and WNHS worked to identify a portion of the development site that would be suitable for an advocacy services facility. As the project evolved WNHS made a commitment to sell a small parcel within the larger site to CARDV for their advocacy center, and then to make up to ten of the units in their new 24-unit affordable housing development available for survivors on a preferred basis.

The City of Corvallis helped CARDV carry out their project with a \$150,000 Community Development Block Grant that funded acquisition of the project site. CARDV then raised funds through private grants and donations to build the facility that, on June 1, 2012, began helping survivors of domestic violence living in Alexander Court, South Corvallis, the greater Corvallis area and beyond. The City and its Housing Division are very pleased to have had the opportunity to help bring this significant project into being.

Service Enhancement Package

Development Services has completed year 2, of a 3-year service enhancement package. The package was approved by City Council and started on January 1, 2011. The package received widespread support from both community and stakeholder groups.

The goal is to make the development and permitting process more timely and predictable while maintaining the highest level of code compliance.

Below are a few of the many exciting features of the 3-year Service Enhancement Package, designed to improve service delivery and the overall customer experience:

- **Over-the-Counter Plans**—At the onset, 26% of plans were reviewed and approved within 1-day of receipt. This number is currently at 42% with the goal to reach 60%.
- **ePlans**—Deploy electronic plan review software (Fall 2013)
- **Project Manager**—A position to help shepherd projects and proactively navigate process.
- **Project Coordinators**—Combine inspector and plans examiner disciplines into Project Coordinators. Coordinators will review, inspect, and approve projects from start to finish.
- **New Homes**—Scheduling system for 1-day plan reviews of new homes.
- **CorvallisPermits.com**—Improved online interface for construction project information.

Housing Rehabilitation Loan Program Revamped

It used to be that offering low income Corvallis homeowners housing repair and rehabilitation loans with an interest rate of 2% left the City's Housing Division unable to meet demand. But in these days of record low interest rates, even a 2% loan might not seem all that attractive. So the Housing Division has gone a step further: amortized loans from the City's Neighborhood Improvement Program now carry no interest, and have a repayment term of twenty years.

Why make the program even more attractive to borrowers? It's simple: the program's goal is and always has been to help low income owners maintain their homes in good repair when financing from conventional lenders is not available, or when the terms of other loans are not manageable.

Over the years hundreds of Corvallis homes have been repaired with a Neighborhood Improvement Program loan. Many projects have consisted of things like the replacement of roofs, siding, windows and doors. Other common project elements have included plumbing and electrical upgrades, foundation repairs, furnace replacements and more frequently in recent years, accessibility upgrades to help people with mobility challenges stay in their homes as long as possible.

For more information about the City's Neighborhood Improvement Program contact Joe DeMarzo in the Housing Division by phone at (541) 766-6944, or by e-mail at Joe.Demarzo@corvallisoregon.gov.

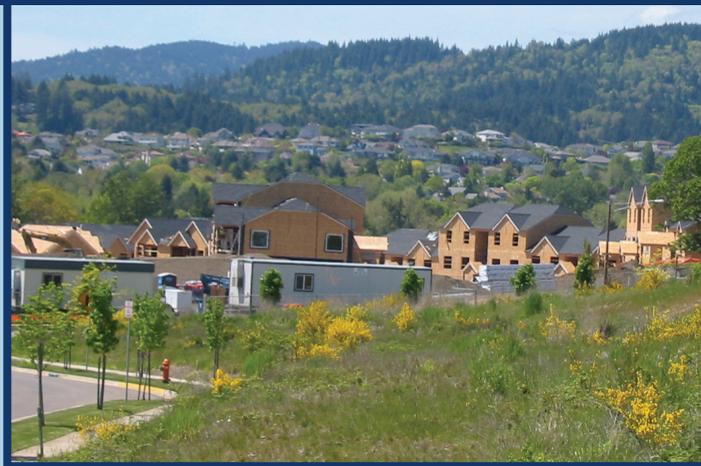
2012 Land Development Code Amendment Package

In April of 2011, the City Council approved a two-year work program for the Planning Division to include a package of Land Development Code (LDC) Amendments. Staff dedicated significant time during the past 18 months to develop, test and finalize a series of LDC amendment proposals.

The code amendments fall into five categories which addressed Council goals, a recommendation from the City/OSU collaboration project, proposals from community members and staff identified changes:

- proposed code changes related to infill development;
- “housekeeping” items that correct inconsistencies and omissions in the LDC;
- substantive items intended to streamline the implementation of the LDC;
- code related changes designed to facilitate production of, and access to, “local food;” and
- increased on-site parking requirements for most types of 4- and 5-bedroom dwelling units (excludes single family dwellings on individual lots).

In the fall of 2012 the LDC package was presented for public comment at hearings before the Planning Commission and City Council. Ultimately, the Planning Commission endorsed, and the City Council unanimously approved the LDC amendments, which became effective in December 2013

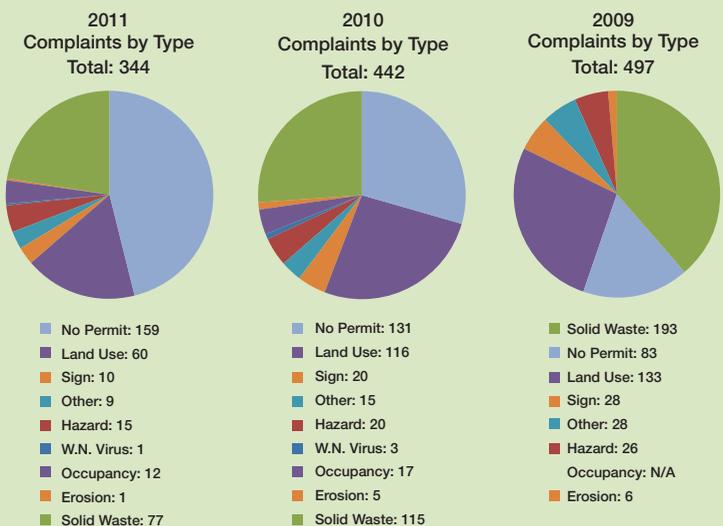


The Code Enforcement Program

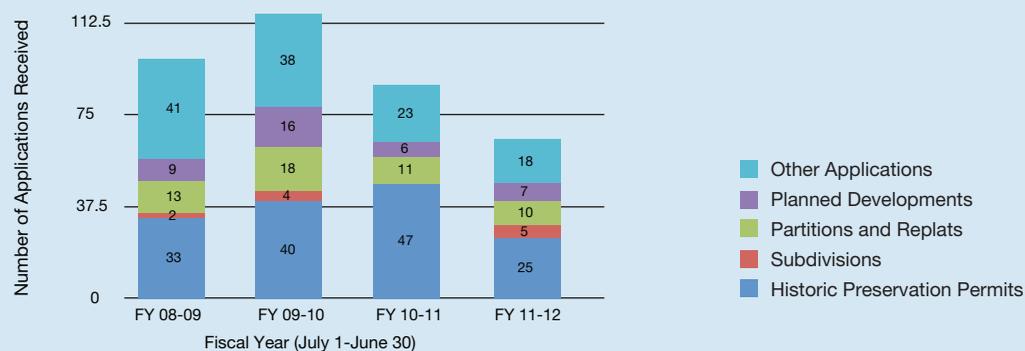
is primarily concerned with livability issues, including the development of property and the use of structures, over-occupied dwellings, inoperative and unlicensed vehicles on private property, and garbage accumulation.

Through October 15, 2012 there have been 473 new complaint cases received and 266 cases have been closed, for the year to date. As indicated in the Activity Levels chart, this rate of complaints received is on a course to meet or exceed previous peak levels.

The complaint type trends reveal where the efforts of the Code Enforcement program have produced results, and they also indicate where the bulk of current and future resources are directed. As rates of solid waste and Land Use complaints have declined by half under focused attention on those issues, the rate of instances of work occurring without permits has doubled.



Number of Land Use Applications Received (by Fiscal Year)



May 2012 Building Safety Month Celebration—CORVALLIS KIDS GO HANDS-ON!

Building Safety Month, an annual event sponsored by the International Code Council, invites us to appreciate that every day our well-being depends on the safety of the structures that shelter us. Staff from the Development Services Division found a fun way to share this important message.

At the May 5, 2012 Corvallis Farmers’ Market, kids lined up to build some very special real estate: housing and dining facilities for critters! At one of three kid-sized workstations, partnering closely with a staff-member, each child transformed a modest looking stack of wood and a few nails into a solidly built, quality structure with serious curb appeal.

Bird houses and squirrel feeders weren’t the only things built that day. There was also the opportunity to build awareness. Dan Carlson, Corvallis Building Official, explains: “Simple actions, like adding smoke detectors, don’t require permits and are proven to save lives. This is the type of message we try to share with kids and their parents.”

Assistant Building Official Mike Fegles with a young contractor/owner.



In the public forum meeting of the Community Livability workgroup, Code Enforcement staff raised several recommendations for enhancing and adopting codes to address the livability concerns that are regularly raised but for which there are little or no existing provisions to apply. Options included adopting a property maintenance code with requirements for rental licensing, garbage service required with water & sewer account, minimum abatement periods for solid waste removal, and a gravel parking survey.

Contact:

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chris.westfall@ci.corvallis.or.us

CASE ACTIVITY LEVELS



Community Development Administration Division

Social Services: For FY 11-12, the City Council reaffirmed the social service funding priorities were emergency and transitional services. The Social Services Allocation in FY 11-12 includes \$250,000 with an additional \$102,870 for the passage of the levy. Funding was provided to 17 different agencies. United Way received 5% of the total funding for administering the program. Community Development staff manages a contract with United Way of Benton County to administer the allocation program for the City.

Economic Development Activities

Economic Development Commission: In 2011-12, the Administration Division provided staff support to the Economic Development Commission (EDC). The Commission's activities included developing The Corvallis Economic Development Strategy which was adopted by the City Council in early January 2012. The Commission also made recommendations to the City Council, regarding Economic Development budgetary requirements and staffing required to execute the strategic plan. As part of the FY 12-13 Budget, the City Council joined with Benton County to fund a City of Corvallis Economic Development Manager position.

Airport Industrial Park Master Plan: Community Development Staff continued to work with the Airport Industrial Park Subcommittee to prepare the update to the Airport Industrial Park (AIP) Master Plan. In early 2012, the City Council accepted the preliminary Plan and asked that staff request County approval of a new AIP zone that is consistent with the AIP Master Plan update.

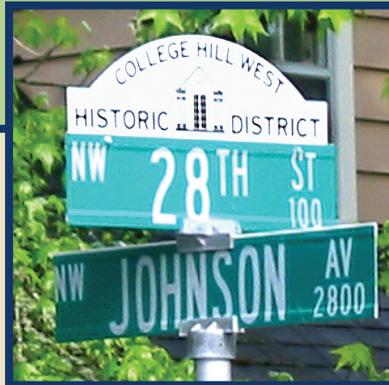
Downtown Commission: With the support of Community Development Staff, the Downtown Commission finalized its 2012 Work Program. The Commission worked on several projects over the past year including: developing a package of Land Development Code amendments that address downtown issues and opportunities, supporting the Downtown Association's pursuit of an Economic Improvement District for years 2012-17, and supporting hiring a consultant to perform a traffic study for the downtown area. The Commission also reviewed a request to allow food carts to be located in the downtown area on a year round basis. After carefully considering the matter and conducting public outreach, the Commission forwarded a recommendation to the City Council that would allow year round food carts under certain conditions.

Historic Preservation

The City of Corvallis is home to three National Register Historic Districts: the Avery-Helm district, the College Hill-West District, and the OSU District (which was formed in 2008). There are also more than 150 resources that are independently listed on either the Local or National Register of Historic Places. Provisions within the City's Land Development Code govern alterations, demolitions, and new development within historic districts and on sites with independently listed resources. Some types of development are exempt from review, others require a staff-level review, and other types of development require review by the Historic Resources Commission to ensure that the proposed development maintains the historic character of the resource or district.

The Historic Resources Commission is a group of nine expert volunteers, appointed by the City Council, which reviews and makes decisions on Historic Preservation Permit applications, makes recommendations to the City Council regarding the preservation of local historic and cultural resources, and leads outreach activities to bring awareness regarding the benefits of historic preservation. The HRC is supported by Planning Division staff, and over the past year, both have been busy reviewing Historic Preservation Permits. As shown in the table on the previous page of this newsletter, of the 65 land use applications received by the Planning Division in Fiscal Year 11-12, 25, or nearly 40%, of them were Historic Preservation Permit applications. Applications range from a home owner requesting to replace original windows with new windows of a different design or material, to the construction of new buildings on the OSU campus. In all cases, Planning Division staff strive to help applicants understand the application review process, and to develop proposals that provide information necessary to satisfy applicable decision making criteria.

In addition to reviewing Historic Preservation Permit applications, in May, Planning Division staff and the HRC joined with other community members and groups to celebrate National Historic Preservation Month. This year's theme was Oregon Women Vote, in recognition of the Centennial of Oregon women winning the right to vote. Activities included walking tours of historic neighborhoods, workshops on the City's historic preservation rules, and the annual Historic Preservation Awards ceremony. A special workshop was also held this year with representatives from the State Historic Preservation Office and OSU to discuss methods to more efficiently review OSU development proposals, while still ensuring the historic integrity of the OSU historic district.



Community Development Boards & Commissions

Board of Appeals:

Hears appeals of decisions made by building official on construction-related issues and on rental housing standards code.

Committee for Citizen Involvement:

Facilitates citizen involvement in all phases of land use planning.

Downtown Commission

Provides policy guidance and recommendations to the City Council in the following areas: Implementation of community plans for the downtown area; public infrastructure activities; redevelopment efforts; land use matters; and public parking policies and projects.

Historic Resources Commission:

Conducts public hearings and takes action on Historic Preservation Permit applications; coordinates Historic Preservation outreach and education activities.

Housing and Community Development Commission:

Recommends policies on housing and community revitalization, affordable housing.

Planning Commission:

Conducts public hearings and takes action on land development proposals, makes recommendations regarding the Comprehensive Plan, Land Development Code, and other land use plans.

City/OSU Collaboration Project Steering Committee:

A joint steering committee made up of city and OSU representatives oversees the overall Collaboration Project, as well as the three work groups.

Meeting dates, times and location are listed on the City's Web calendar at <http://www.ci.corvallis.or.us/calendar/calendar.php>. To confirm any meeting, call the Community Development Department at 541-766-6981.

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Jason Yaich, Associate Planner

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Permit & Plan Review Services

Mike Fegles, Project Manager

Phyllis Doolittle, Administrative Specialist

Tenille Holroyd, Permit Coordinator

Cheryl Flick, Permit Technician II

Paul Wolterman, Project Coordinator I

Johnathan Balkema, Project Coordinator I

Bill Clemens, Project Coordinator II

Mike O'Connor, Project Coordinator II

Kevin Russell, Land Use Supervisor

Jared Voice, Associate Planner

Shannen Chapman, Land Use Inspector

Lisa Franklin, Civil Engineer I

Kham Slater, Engineering Technician III

Inspection Services

24-Hour Inspection Request Line:
541-766-6745

Greg Hall, Specialty Inspection Supervisor

John Corliss, Building Inspector

Norm Domagala, Building Inspector II

David Hensley, Plumbing Inspector

Frank DeWilde, Electrical Inspector

Chris Westfall, Code Enforcement Supervisor

Corvallis Planning-Related On-line Services

Community Development Department.....	www.ci.corvallis.or.us/cd
Planning Division Home Page	www.ci.corvallis.or.us/cd/planning
Archived Documents.....	http://archive.ci.corvallis.or.us
Building Permit Info	www.corvallispermits.com
Comprehensive Plan.....	www.ci.corvallis.or.us/cd/complan
Current Land Use Staff Reports.....	www.ci.corvallis.or.us/cd/staffreports
Historic Preservation Information	www.ci.corvallis.or.us/cd/historic
Interactive Maps & GIS	www.corvallismaps.com
Published Maps & Documents	www.ci.corvallis.or.us/cd/publications
Zoning—Land Development Code	www.ci.corvallis.or.us/cd/zoning